

November 3, 2003

Chairman Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 Twelfth Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

On behalf of New York State fire departments, I would like to bring to your attention an important issue that profoundly impacts our country. The issue is public safety radio interference – a problem in desperate need of a solution. Public safety communications systems including those used by fire departments and commercial wireless operations are located on adjacent and intermingled channels in the 800 MHz spectrum band. The problem: the technologies used by public safety and commercial wireless are incompatible with one another as neighbors. The result: dangerous interference, which causes garbled communications and prevents public safety officials from doing their jobs.

The Consensus Plan, currently under consideration at the Federal Communications Commission, would realign the current jumbled licensing of 800 MHz systems into separate blocks of spectrum for public safety and cellular wireless carriers. By implementing this plan, public safety interference will be virtually eliminated. Also, public safety will receive additional spectrum for future communications needs. Perhaps equally important, the Consensus Plan will be implemented at no cost to the American taxpayer.

The Consensus Plan is the only proactive and comprehensive solution to the dangerous problem of public safety interference. Please support New York's fire departments and implement the Consensus Plan without delay.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,